

# The Manhattan Princess

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Summary: Jack finds a stray to bring back to the lodging house, but what's this? It's a little girl! How will the newsies react to that.

## The Manhattan Princess

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><br>Jack walked through the ally ways of Manhattan heading back to the Manhattan Newsboys Lodging House. It had been a long day for him. He had had a hard time selling his papes that day. No one just didn't want to buy a pape. He was tired, and just wanted to go to sleep early. He passed by a garbage bend when something silvery caught his eye. He stopped staring at it then inched up to it slowly. He focused his eyes on the shape that was around the silvery light. It was tiny. He finally stepped up to it to see a mass of blonde locks and a tiny body curled in a ball. He touched the little warm body. It was a little girl. Jack didn't know what to do. He thought for a moment to what to do with the little girl. Then he started to gently shock her. The little girl groaned lowly then opened her eyes and raising her head.

><br>"Youse okay, kid?" Jack asked her.

><br>"I want to sleep" she replied laying her head back down.

><br>"Hey kid, why 're ya in dis ally way? Wheres ya parents?"

><br>"I have no parents. I ran away from the orphanage."

><br>"Youse comin' wit me den."

><br>"I don't know you."

><br>"Dat doesn't matta. Youse comin' wit me." Jack picked the girl up. She was light as a feather he noted. She didn't struggle out of his arms. Instead, she went back to sleep. Jack carried her back to the lodging house. He enter the bunkroom where most of his newsies were back from their hard days work too.

><br>"Heya Jack, whatcha got?" Race asked smoking one of his cigars sitting around with a few other newsies playing poker as usual.

><br>"Shush, Race. Ya don' wanna wake 'er do ya?" Jack said in a low voice laying the girl on his bed. Some of the guys walked over to him to see what he brought in.

><br>"Dat's a little goirl" Mush remarked.

><br>"No kiddin', Mush. Wha' else would it be" Race said slapping his friend in the back of his head.

><br>"Where's ya get 'er, Jack?" Skittery asked walking up.

><br>"I found 'er in a ally way. She said she has no parents and ran away from a orphanage. Ise couldn't leave 'er out dare. So, I brought 'er back 'ere."

><br>"Wha' 're we gonna do wit 'er?"

><br>"For now, wese gonna let 'er sleep. I don' know wha' ta do aftah dat."

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><br>A few hours later, it was almost midnight, and Jack sat by his bed in an uncomfortable wooden chair waiting for the girl to wake up. Finally, she stirred and opened her deep blue eyes. Jack looked up to see she was awake. He leaned toward the bed as she stared straight at him.

><br>"Youse finally awake. Do ya remembah me?"

><br>"Yeah. You woke me up from my sleep. Where am I?" she asked looking around confused.

><br>"Youse at da Newsboys Lodging House."

><br>"I can't be here" she said glaring around the large room seeing dozens of boys. "This place is for boys."

><br>"Its a place fer ev'ryone" Jack replied defensively. "Youse welcome ta stay as long as ya need ta. Besides, dere's one goirl 'ere. My names Jack Kelly. Wha's yours?"

><br>"Julie Carpenter."

><br>"How old 're ya, Julie?"

><br>"Seven."

><br>"Youse a tiny thing. Did da orphanage evah feed ya?"

><br>"Just stale bread and milk. I never had anything but that."

><br>"How'd ya get in da orphanage?"

><br>"My mother died when I was three and my father abandon my mother before I was born. I don't know if I have a family out there somewhere."

><br>"Youse 'ave a family now, kid. Da newsies 're ya family now."

><br>"The newsies? What's that?"

><br>"Youse nevah seen out on da streets boys hawkin' newspapers?"

><br>"I've never been outside of the orphange."

><br>"Well, Ise jist gonna 'ave ta teach you ev'rything 'bout being a newsie. Nevah had a little girl newsie 'ere before. Youse gonna be da foist. Now, wha' should wese calls ya?"

><br>"I told you my name was Julie."

><br>"I know, but ev'ry newsie has a nickname."

><br>"What's your nickname, Jack?"

><br>"Ise called Cowboy. As youse can tell." Jack stood up showing off his clothes and cowboy hat.

><br>"Give me a nickname then." He looked at the little girl for a moment then sat back down thinking of a nickname for her. Her eyes waiting for him to respond. Jack thought for a sec at what she looked like. Maybe a little angel, or a princess. He had it now. Princess.

><br>"Ise gonna call you Princess."

><br>"You really think I look like a princess?" Julie asked her eyes lighting up and her mouth revealing her toothy grin with a couple front teeth missing. She was even a cuter site when she smiled.

><br>"Yeah. Youse da princess of da Manhattan newsies now. Get some more sleep. Wese 'ave a long day tomarrah."

><br>Jack started walking away heading for an empty bed at the end of the room when Julie stopped him.

><br>"Jack" she said. He spun back around.

><br>"Yeah, Jules."

><br>"Thanks for finding me."

><br>"No problem, kid. Now get some more sleep."

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><br>The next morning, Jack woke up a little early to get Julie up and aquanaut her with all the guys. He walked over to his bed with Julie sleeping in it. She looked so peaceful he didn't want to wake her, but he knew he had to, and started shaking her gently.

><br>"Julie. Princess. Wake up, kid" he said. Julie opened her eyes and flinch when she saw him. "Its okay, kid. Its jist me, Jack. Remembah?"

><br>"Yeah. I remembah. I jist got a little shocked" she murmured sitting up.

><br>"Sorry 'bout dat. So, ya ready fer ya foist day of sellin'?"

><br>"I'm ready to eat." She stood up and stretched. Jack disappeared for a moment in the washroom then returned carrying a change of clothes.

><br>"Here. Wear dis" he said throwing it to her. She held them up to see they were boys' clothes.

><br>"This is boys' clothes. I can'tâ€!"

><br>He cut her off. "Jist fer today. Da washroom is roight dere."

><br>Julie nodded, walking to the washroom where Jack was pointing. She went into one of the bathrooms to change. She closed the door behind her and started to slip off her torn little yellow dress with mud stains on it she was wearing. The door opened with Race on the other side. Julie hurried to slip on the shirt Jack gave then screamed.

><br>"O dear me, Ise sorry, kid" he said covering his eyes closing the door behind him.

><br>"That's okay" she said huddling down.

><br>Jack ran into the washroom after hearing the scream. "Wha' happen?"

><br>"I accidentally walked in on ya little goirl" Race explained. "Shes okay."

><br>"Awright." Jack waited outside of the bathroom Julie was in until she came out in her newsie attire.

><br>"I feel like aâ€!" She paused looked down at herself. "Boy. I even look like one" she exclaimed folding her arms.

><br>"Dats da whole point, Julie. Ya look good. Wanna be introduced ta da guys?"

><br>"Sure. Why not?"

><br>"Hey ev'ryone! Listen up! I want ta introduce ya ta our newest newsie." He picked Julie up. "Dis is Julie. She likes ta be called Princess too. Dats da nickname I gave 'er." He put her back down.

"Now, Ise want all a youse ta not treat 'er like shes not one a us. Cause she is now. Ya got dat?"

><br>Everyone nodded. Race walked up to Julie after Jack finished

talking.

><br>"Hey. Sorry 'bout walkin' in on ya, Julie."

><br>"That's okay" she said shrugging.

><br>"Ise Racetrack."

><br>"Racetrack? What kind of name is that?"

><br>"Its me newsie name. Wha'? Ya gotta problem wit dat?"

><br>"No. Just call me Princess. I like it better."

><br>Three other boys and a girl walked up to Julie.

><br>"Hey Princess. Ise Kid Blink" the one with the eye patch said.

><br>"I'm Crutchy" the one with the crutch said.

><br>"And Ise Mush."

><br>"Ise Tillie. Da only goirl 'ere, but now Ise not."

><br>"You don't want me here?" Julie asked worried.

><br>"No, Princess. Ise glad Ise not da only goirl now. Wit youse around, It'll be like haven' a little sistah."

><br>Julie smirked at the word sister. She had never been around a girl older then her. But she had always dreamed of having an older sister after hearing some of the girls her age at the orphanage talk about their older sisters. Julie's mind went back to all the weird names she was being introduce to and thought of Mush's name.

><br>"Now that takes the cake" she all the sudden remarked at Mush's name. Her toothy grin showing. "Where in the world did you get that name? Mush?"

><br>"Ise don' remembah where. I jist was called dat one day I guess." Julie nodded listening.

><br>"Youse got a mouth on youse, kid" Race said.

><br>"I'll take that as a compliment."

><br>Race smirked just like Julie did. "Looks like youse and me gonna get along jist fine, kid."

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><br>Jack and the rest of the gang headed out for the distribution office with Julie in tow. She was enjoying watching her new friends as they goofed around. The boys picked up some bread and coffee from the nuns as they usually did. Jack made sure Julie received a piece of bread. He knew she probably wouldn't want more bread since she said that's all she ate in the orphanage, but he knew to make it up to her at lunch. They all made it to the gates of the distribution office as it was opening. She stood in line between Jack, Tillie, and Race. Even though she had only known them for less than twenty-four hours, she felt more secure around them. Jack, always first in line, stepped up to the office to get his papes as an over weight greasy-looking man opened the shutters.

><br>"Hey Weasel" Jack greeted.

><br>"Hey Cowboy. The usual today?" Weasel asked.

><br>"Nope. Give me hundred and twenty-five. Ise got extra weight today." He gestured Julie to come up with him. "Dis is me new newsie Princess. Ain't she cute? She's gonna help me sell today."

><br>Julie looked at Weasel with a blank expression. He didn't appear trusting to her.

><br>"Watch out, kid. This wise guy will take everything you earn."

><br>"Don' listen ta him Julie. Jist get me papes."

><br>Weasel handed him a tall stack of papers. Jack walked to the steppes sitting with Julie behind him. Julie sat down beside him.

><br>"Now what do we do?" she asked questionably.

><br>"Wese sell da papes. Ya gots ta know da foist rule a sellin papes. Headlines don' sell papesâ€|"

><br>"Newsies sell papes" a voice came from a distance. Julie looked up to see a boy around Jack's age walking up with a boy around ten.

><br>"Hey Dave." They spit in their hands and shock. Julie watched in disbelief at what they had just did. "Ya haven't sold in a week.

Where ya been? I woulda came by, but Ise was busy."

><br>"Mama and Papa are sick. Me and Sarah both had to take care of them. I haven't had time to sell."

><br>"I told him he coulds sent me to sell, but Davey's nevah fair 'bout anything" Les said.

><br>"Is ya parents betta?"

><br>"Their getting better. Sarah can handle the house now." Davey finally noticed the little girl with a million blonde curls, sitting down on the steppes. "Who's this?"

><br>"Dis is me new newsie and now officially da youngest newsie, Julie. Da Princess of Manhattan."

><br>"Hi Julie." Davey bent down to shake her hand. "I'm David."

><br>"I'm Les" Les said enthusiastically.

><br>"Hi" she replied shyly looking at Les, hiding behind Jack. A normal child reaction to strangers. Especially with ones they like.

><br>"Julie is gonna sell wit us from now on."

><br>"Sounds great."

><br>After Davey got his papes, they all walked off together.

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><br>Near Central Park, Jack showed Julie how to hawk a headline. "Wese only improven' da truth" he told her. She didn't really understand what that meant, but went along with it anyway. She watched her new friends for a while picking up on their interesting ways of sellin' their papes. She saw Les act out one of his scenes of how he sold his papes. When he took a rest, she decided to try his way of sellin' herself. When a lady handed her two bits for the pape, she ran back to Jack excited just like Les did the first day he sold one.

><br>They sold all their papes, and headed to Tibby's. Most of the newsies were there already eating and talking loudly like always. Jack, Julie, and Davey sat in a booth by themsleves. Les ran off to sit with his best friends, Boots and Snipeshtooter.

><br>"So, Julie. Wha' do ya want fer ya foist day a real food?"

><br>"I don't know. What kind of food is out there?"

><br>"Hows 'bout a hot dog? You'll like it."

><br>Julie stared at him confused. A hot dog? She'd never heard of one. She did, however, heard of cuddly, playful animal called a dogs.

><br>"I have to eat a dog!" she said hysterically. Her big blue eyes widened.

><br>Jack and Davey laughed at her surprised expression. "No. A hot dog is not made from a real dog" Davey explained. "It's meat on a bun."

><br>"Oâ€|okay. I guess I'll try one then." Jack and Davey laughed again at her.

><br>She gave them her confused expression again. "What?"

><br>Before anything more could be said, some of the newsies in the restaurant walked up to the table.

><br>"Hey Jack. Hey Dave" Tillie greeted walking up with a boy Julie didn't recognize from earlier. "How good was our little Princess at sellin' today?"

><br>"She was a natural, Tillie. Jules 'ere did onna Les's actin' jobs. Sold t'ree papes all by her lonesome. Ise so proud a 'er" Jack replied proudly. Julie grinned contently at what he said.

><br>"Dis is ya new newsie, Jack. Kinda small ta be a newsie, ain't ya, kid" the boy Julie didn't recognize finally spoke.

><br>"I'm suppose to be small! I'm just a little girl!" Julie replied aggressively.

><br>"Uh-o! Girl gots a mouth" Spot said backing off mockingly.

><br>"And Ise so proud a her fer it" Race exclaimed strolling over holding a cigar. "Ya met our newest newsie, Spot?"

><br>"Yeah, but not formaly."

><br>"Dis is Julie, our Princess of Manhattan."

><br>"Good ta meet ya Julie. Ise Spot Conlon, da most famous newsie in alla New Yawk."

><br>"I thought Jack was the most famous newsie?" she asked innocently. Jack and Davey had told her about the strike earlier. By what they were saying, she assumed Jack was the "most famous".

><br>Everyone around the table laughed except for Spot. "No, he's not. Wha'? Ya nevah hoird a me?" He leaned over toward her face. Tillie elbowed him when she saw he was getting too intrusive. She knew his pride was starting to get to him.

><br>"She's jist a little goirl, Spot" Jack replied after seeing Tillie's actions. "She's been in a orphanage all 'er life. Didn' even know wha' a newsie was."

><br>Spot backed off. "Dats okay den."

><br>Tillie, Spot, and Racetrack pulled up chairs to sit down with the trio already seating. A waiter brought their food. Julie hesitated when she saw the hot dog. It was something she'd never seen in her life. She took a bite into it. Her frown changed immediately into a smile.

><br>"This is the best food I ever tasted" she said shaking her head in approval.

><br>"Told ya you'd like it." Jack patted the girl on the back as she took another bite.

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><br>Back at the lodging house, Jack finished introducing Julie to all the other newsies. Julie was becoming attached to everyone especially Jack. They treated her like one of them. It made her happy to be excepted. Unlike at the orphanage, she didn't have any friends there. Her memories of being teased by the other children made her upset, but her feelings changed as she took in everything that was going on in the bunkroom. She watched intently on Jack's bed as Race, Specs, Skittery, and Luke played a silent game of poker. She stared around the room to see Mush and Blink play wrestling. Boots, Snipesniper, and Les were shooting marbles by the door. Tillie and Spot were sitting on top Tillie's bed having an animated conversation about the others. Jack had gone downstairs to talk with Kloppman about something. She stood up to go join the boys playing marbles when she heard a loud yelp. She glanced back to see Race scooping the money pile over to his side of the table. The others throw down their cards in frustration.

><br>"Ise 'ave ta quite fer tonight before Ise lose me papae money" Specs said walking off.

><br>"Why do I even play when Ise know Ise nevah gonna win" Skittery

said laying down on his bed next to the table.

><br>Race lit up a cigar, and saw Julie fixing to walking away. "Hey, Julie. Princess. Come 'ere" he called her before she could go any further. She turned back around, and stepped up to him. "Yeah?"

><br>"Ya wanna learn how ta play poker?"

><br>"Wha's poker?"

><br>Race laughed. "Only da best game of cards ta play. Sit down dere. Ise show ya da ropes."

><br>"Don' let dat wombat learn ya how ta play, Princess. He jist got lucky dat time. Ise da one dat takes da pearls" Luke murmured leaning in close to Julie.

><br>"Shaddup ya Australian imbecile! Ise betta den youse."

><br>"Stop chuckin' a wobbly! At least I can fight wit da besta dem."

><br>Julie observed the two as they fought about who was the best at whatever came through their minds at that moment.

><br>"Ya knows Ise da best, so, jist admit it!" Race pushed Luke back.

><br>"Come off da grass, an' nick off! Ise da only rip snorter 'round 'ere!" Luke shouted pushing him back.

><br>All the sudden, she felt a hand on her shoulder. She circled her head back to see Tillie and Spot standing behind her.

><br>"Don' listen ta dose two. Dey's jist fulla hot air" Tillie remarked. She leaned down to Julie's ear. "Jist like 'im." She inconspicuously fingered to Spot beside her.

><br>"Ise hoird dat goirl" he said folding his arms.

><br>"Good." Tillie stood up straight to look him directly in the eye. "Dat's why I said it roight in fronta ya face."

><br>"Youse lucky youse me goirl. 'Cause if ya wasn', I'd soak ya like dat." He snapped in her face. Julie was getting a little scared at his action, and the tone of his voice. She wondered if he really would hurt her. Tillie stood there with not a stitch of worry on her face. She smirked, and pushed him, running off. "Ise gonna soak ya now goirl!" He ran after her, and they both disappeared out the fire escape.

><br>"Will he really hurt her?" Julie asked Skittery who was still laying on his bed near the table.

><br>"Naw. Dey's always like dat. Dey play dese weird couple games dat only dey undastand. Ise nevah got why da play dose kinda game."

><br>"Why not?"

><br>"Ise not lucky 'nough ta getta goirl."

><br>"Jules" she heard her name being called. It was Race again. He'd won the fight with Luke after Luke said he had to 'take a walkabout'. "Ya ready ta loirn how ta play poker?"

><br>"Yeah." She walked back to the table, and sat down across from him.

><br>"Y'see Jules, poker is a game a chance. Ya jist gotta play it da best way ya can. No matta how bad ya cards 're, ya face has gotta stay da same as it always is. An' ya can't move eithah."

><br>"Why not?"

><br>"A coitoin move ya do'll make ya look obvious. Like when ya gotta

><br>"Straight" - dat's the second highest possible hand - and youse toucha mouth and ya do dat ev'rytime ya got one. Den ya look obvious an' ev'rybody ya playin' wit knows ya gotta straight. Ya undastand?" Julie nodded her head noting really know what the heck Race was talking about. A while later, Race had finished teaching Julie

everything he knew about the game. They were playing a mock shift version of it with the money Race won that night. Julie laid her cards down on the table. "Is this good?" she asked innocently. Race glanced over at her cards to see a four of a kind. He throw down his cards grinning.

><br>"Kid, ya good. Dat definaly beats my hand." He laid his cards down shaking his head. Two pairs. "Ise didn' even see a stitch a anything on ya face, Princess. Youse 're good. Ise should take ya to da track. Ya like horses?"

><br>"I heard of them, but I never seen one before."

><br>"Its settled den. Ya goin' ta da races wit me tamarrah. We'll see if Jack'll let ya sell wit me too."

><br>"I'd like that."

><br>"Like wha' Jules?" Jack asked coming in the room.

><br>"Race wants me to sell with him tomorrow. After we sell, he's going to bring me to the track" she said enthusiastically showing off her missingteeth. Jack looked at the table. It had cards, money, and cigar ashes on it with the hint of smoke in the air. Jack shook his head, and grabbed Race's arm dragging him outside of the bunkroom.

><br>"Whatcha doin', Jack?" Race asked jerking his arm out of Jack's grasp.

><br>"Were ya teachin' Jules how ta play poker?" "Yeah. Why?"

><br>"Ise don' want ya corruptin' me little goirl, Race?"

><br>"Ya little goirl? Jack, ya actin' like Julie is ya little sistah 'ersumptin."

><br>"Ise jist watchin' out fer 'er. She's only seven fer heaven sakes! From wha' she told me, she nevah had anyone take care a 'er. Ise don' want ya ta teach 'er how ta gamble 'specially at da track."

><br>"Awroight. I won' let 'er play anymore poker. Why can' I take 'er ta da track? She don' know wha'bettin' on a horse is. Beside, she got all excited when I told 'er Ise was brin' 'er tamarrah. It won' hurt 'er. Jist fer one day."

><br>Jack peered into the bunkroom. Julie was wrastling with Mush and Blink, who still had enough energy to last them a lifetime.

><br>"Awroight. But, jist one day. Dat's all. No betting while ya dere eithah. Ya got dat?" Jack looked Race straight in the eye trying to intimidate him.

><br>"Nobettin' while she's around. Got it." Jack and Race walked back into the bunkroom.

><br>"Ya ready ta go ta bed, Princess?" Jack asked to Julie who was being tossed in the air by Blink. He caught her, and handed her to Jack.

><br>"Do I have too? I'm having so much fun. Blink and Mush really like me."

><br>"She's a cute kid, Jack. Light as a feather too" Blink said ruffling her blonde curls.

><br>"Youse t'ree can finish ya tossing game tamarrah. Jules needs 'er sleep." He throw her over his shoulder, and walked to his bunk a few beds down. Julie waved doleful as he carried her off. "G'night Jules" Race said to her. Jack set her down on a bed next to his that he convinced Luke to give up so Julie could sleep near him.

><br>"Are ya gonna sleep in dat or do ya want one me shirts ta sleep in?"

><br>"I can sleep in this for tonight" she replied about her clothes she had worn that day. "I'll just slip these pants off. I can't take

the way they feel any longer." She ducked under the covers emerging a minute later.

><br>"Get use ta dem. If ya gonna live 'ere an' be a newsie, ya gotta dress likeon."

><br>"But, why?"

><br>"So, people won' see a little goirl livin' like dey think ya livin." Julie stared at him dazed. "Ise explain dat ta ya later. An' Ise lettin Race take ya ta da track ta see da horses tamarrah." Julie smiled joyfully. "Now ya gots ta sleep."

><br>"Jack, can you tell me a bedtime story. At the orphanage, sometimes dey'd read us a bedtime story."

><br>"A bedtime story? Ise guess I can shot out one ta get ya asleep. Let see 'ere." Jack thought for a moment as Julie got comfortable. "I got one. Y'see, Jules, a few months ago me an' da resta me newsies were mindin' our own business. Goin' along wit our lives when Mighty Villain Joe decided ta make da lives of all his newsie employees miserableâ€|" Jack went on for a while not realizing Julie had fallen asleep. A small crowd gathered around the bunks to listen to him tell the story of the strike in a fairy tale style. When he was done, he received around of applause by his friends just as Kloppman was coming up to tell them lights out.

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><br>It was about three in the morning when Race felt something shaking him. He opened his eyes to see in the dim moon light Julie standing over him.

><br>"Whatcha need, kid, ta wake me up in da mid-mornin' hours?" he murmured rolling over. "I need to go to the bathroom bad." "Go den. Ise not stoppin' ya."

><br>"But, it's dark. And the washroom is all the way down there. Will you bringme?"

><br>"Why can' Jack bring ya?"

><br>"He sleeps on the top bunk. I can' reach him from down here."

><br>Race groaned pulling off his covers. "C'mon." He walked her to the washroom, and waited outside the bathroom door. The door opened, and Julie stepped out sluggishly.

><br>"Ya finish?"

><br>She nodded.

><br>"I jist don' know 'bout ya, kid."

><br>He picked her up bring her back to her bed. Julie had already fallen asleep by the time Race set her down on her bed. He looked at her shaking his head then climbed back in his own bed.

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><br>The next day, Julie sold with Race at the track. She was having as much excitement as she did the day before with Jack. They finished selling their papes then sat down in the stands watching the horses run. Race was getting a craving to bet on one, but Jack's words whirled through his head- No betting around Julie. He thought for a moment. Jack will nevah know. Hes not 'ere.

><br>"Jules, I'll be roight back, 'kay. Youse stay 'ere" he told her. She nodded not taking her eyes off the horse. Race stood up, and walked off to the betting office. He bet on Shetland, a short horse who was on a winning streak. He got back to the stands just in time next race. He looked around to see Julie missing. It's okay. Da goirls probably wanderin' 'round. He walked around the stands not seeing a trace of Julie anywhere. Race started to panic. If I lose dis goirl, Jack'll nevah forgive me.

><br>"Julie! Jules! Where ya at, kid?! Dis ain't funny, Jules!" Race yelled over the crowd. He stopped an overweight man walking by.

"Excuse me, sir. 'ave ya seen a little goirl 'bout dis high." Race held his hand up a little past his waist. The man shook his head, and walked on. He was beginning to lose hope when someone called him.

><br>"Racetrack" he heard from behind him. Race spun around to see Julie standing there. He let out a sigh of relief, and embraced the girl. Julie eyes wondered the stands confused. "Jules, don' do dat ta me." "What did I do?" Race pulled her away. "Ya left da place where I told ya ta stay. I came back ta see ya gone, an' almost had a heart attack when I couldn' find ya."

><br>"Sorry. I didn't know I'd scare you like that." She gave him a pitiful expression.

><br>"Its okay. Ya 'ere. We can go ta Tibby's now." He grabbed her hand, and started walking out the stands. "Ise know I'm not lettin' ya out me sight again. Where'd ya go anyway?" "I wanted to go see the horses up close."

><br>"Maybe wese can do dat sometime dis week." If Jack doesn't kill me foist.

><br>The two trekked to Tibby's. Everyone was there as usual. Julie immediately ran to Jack to tell him about her day. He tossed her on his laps as she went into a rambling tone about Race losing her. When she finished, Jack set her down on his chair, and walked over to Race who was sitting at a table with Mush and Blink. Jack gestured him to follow him outside.

><br>"Wha's up, Jack?" "Julie told me you left her today. Where'd ya go?"

><br>"I only went ta check on sumptin'. Julie wanted ta watch da horses. I only left 'er fer a minute. When I came back, she was gone. But, I found 'er. She's safe. I know not ta leave 'er alone again." "Dat's all dat 'appen?"

><br>"Yeah. Jack, why ya so protective of da goirl?"

><br>"I told ya she needs some one ta watch out fer 'er. Its da foist time she's been out in da real woild. She's don' know anything. Dat's all."

><br>Race stared at his friend who was pretty edgy at the moment.

"Awright."

><br>The two started to walk back inside. Jack put his arm around Race's shoulder. "Did ya win?" he asked knowing exactly what Race had left Julie to do. Knowing he was caught, Racetrack let out a frustrated sigh. "I don' know. I was so worried 'bout findin' Jules, I didn' even care if I won."

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><br>It was getting late. Every newsie had cleared out of Tibby's, and headed for the lodging house. Jack took Julie back into his custody. He walked to the lodging house with Julie on his shoulders. The night sky was crystal clear that night. Julie was loving staring up at the stars. When they returned to the lodging house, Jack brought her on top of the roof to get a better look at the stars. Julie sat beside him pointing out the different shapes she saw the stars forming.

><br>"That buncha stars looks like a rabbit, doesn't it?" she said leaning over his knee pointing out the rabbit she had spotted in the sky. Jack looked to where Julie's finger was aiming at.

><br>"Yeah, Jules. Dat does look lika rabbit" he agreed with her only seeing a clump of stars. But, he knew his young companion saw more than just - a clump of stars. He felt something touching his leg when Julie leaned over him. He looked down to see between the blonde curls a silver locket glimmering in the moonlight. "Jules, wha's dis?" He grabbed it and pulled it closer to his face to get a better look at

it.

><br>"What does it look like?" she replied roughly taking it from Jack's grasp.

><br>"It looks like a locket. Where'd ya get it?"

><br>"From my mother before she died."

><br>Jack raised his eyebrow.

><br>"Really? I thought ya said ya mother died when youse was t'ree. Ise don' think a dying woman would give 'er t'ree year old daughter a locket. And, den da daughter would still 'ave it all deseyears."

><br>Julie lowed her head. "Ya right. This is who I got the locket from."

><br>She opened the circle-shaped locket to reveal a tiny picture. Jack held it up to the light coming from inside the lodging house. It was a picture of a boy that looked younger than him.

><br>"Who is dis?"

><br>"My brother."

><br>Jack turned back to face her. "Ya didn' tell me ya had a brother. Why not, kid?"

><br>"It didn't seem important. I have no parents. No family. What's the point of mentioning a dead brother too." A tear started to form in Julie's eye. Jack put his arm around her, and brought her closer to him.

><br>"Ise sorry, Jules."

><br>"That's okay. He's been gone for about a year. I thought I was over it, butâ€¦ I don't know."

><br>"Listen, Julie, Ise kinda in da same boat youse 're. I had a little sister jist like you. Her name was Laura. I use ta bring her 'round town, and ta da park. I loved 'er so much, but when my mother got sick, Laura did too. She died afta me mother did. I had no one. Dat's how I ended up wit danewsies."

><br>"Our stories sound a like."

><br>"Yeah. Dey do." Jack looked back up at the sky just in time to see a falling star. "Look Jules! A fallin' star."

><br>Julie glanced up to see it as well.

><br>"Dey say if ya make a wish on a fallin' star, ya wish will come true."

><br>Julie closed her eyes and made a wish.

><br>"Wha'd ya wish fer, kid?"

><br>"That I get to stay here with you forever."

><br>"Same thing I wished fer."

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End  
file.